

Le Canadien (Windsor)

Publication Dates

1891: July 25th - 1892?

Frequency

Weekly

Online Holdings

1891: July 25 (Vol. 1: no. 1) 4p.

Source of our Digitized Holdings

Leddy Library, University of Windsor microfilm

Description

Le Canadien (Windsor) was one of several short-lived French language newspapers published and edited by Telesphore Saint-Pierre. It was a weekly, 4 page paper that began publication on July 25, 1891, and likely ceased in late 1891 or 1892. Based on the first issue, it contained a fairly standard selection of local to international news, many advertisements, and prose. It was aimed at the French Canadian population in the western part of Ontario, but also had subscribers in Michigan.

Telesphore Saint-Pierre was born on July 10, 1869 in Lavaltrie, Quebec. In 1878, his family settled in Detroit, Michigan, where he apprenticed as a typographer with Rousseau et Fils, Printers. This was the beginning of a very restless publishing life. In 1885, at the age of only sixteen, he became an editor at Le Progres (Windsor). By 1888, he had founded his first newspaper with a friend, Charles Guerin. This paper L'Ouest Francais (Bay City, Michigan) lasted only 11 months, from June 1888 to May 1889. At this point, he started a second newspaper: L'Union Franco-Americaine (Lake Linden, Michigan), which was published from 1889-1891. In 1891, he moved back to the Windsor/Detroit region and founded his third newspaper, Le Canadien, described above.

During most of the 1890s, he lived in Montreal, where he was, in turn, a newspaper editor at La Patrie, La Minerve, Le Canada, Le Soir, the Gazette, and the Montreal Daily Herald. During this time, he published a number of pamphlets and books, L'Histoire des Canadiens du Michigan et du Comte D'Essex, Ontario, being perhaps the best known (Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Toronto : University of Toronto, 1998; vol. 14). In fact, it appears that this work had also been sold earlier in 8 installments (Le Canadien: 1891: July 25th, page 4). From 1899 to 1903, he was editor of L'Opinion Publique (Worcester, Massachusetts). Finally, he moved to St. Boniface, Winnipeg, Manitoba where he worked as an editor at the Manitoba Free Press, and then founded another short-lived newspaper: L'Ouest Canadien. He died October 25, 1912.

Many of his values are reflected in the Prospectus of the first issue of his newspaper, *Le Canadien* (Windsor). Surprisingly, his values are not particularly evident in the rest of the content of the same issue. His over-riding purpose was to safeguard "les traits caractéristiques de notre nationalité, notre langue, notre foi, nos institutions paroissiales". These, he felt, were under attack from both American and Canadian governments. Although liberal in his politics, he pledged to be non-partisan and counselled readers to look critically at all political parties, their policies and actions, and to be one's own judge. This was all framed within a very traditional view of country. He states, the newspaper's name: *Le Canadien* was chosen because it was "partout synonyme de fidélité aux traditions, de loyauté et de courage". He urges his readers to embrace their history and not to forget the hard work of their ancestors. He praises the role of the early Catholic Church in North America, and is generally optimistic that there will be a resurgence of Francophone society and culture.

Updated: Katharine Ball, May 2022